



Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive

Institutional Publications

News Articles Collection

2016-09

NPS, NSAM Honor Gold Star Families at Bells Across America Ceremony

Public Affairs Office, Naval Postgraduate School

Naval Postgraduate School

<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/51812>



Calhoun is a project of the Dudley Knox Library at NPS, furthering the precepts and goals of open government and government transparency. All information contained herein has been approved for release by the NPS Public Affairs Officer.

Dudley Knox Library / Naval Postgraduate School
411 Dyer Road / 1 University Circle
Monterey, California USA 93943

<http://www.nps.edu/library>

NPS Staff, Students Pitch Innovative Ideas at Inaugural Athena Monterey Meeting

 [my.nps.edu /-/nps-staff-students-pitch-innovative-ideas-at-inaugural-athena-monterey-meeting](https://my.nps.edu/-/nps-staff-students-pitch-innovative-ideas-at-inaugural-athena-monterey-meeting)

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael Ehrlich

By MC2 Michael Ehrlich

The London Bridge Pub in downtown Monterey hosts NPS students, faculty and staff in the first meeting of The Athena Project Monterey Chapter, Aug. 25.

Working in coordination with the Naval Innovation Advisory Council, The Athena Project is an all-volunteer effort designed to connect innovative ideas to the individuals and organizations that can lend support to them. The effort began in San Diego in 2013, and has since expanded to Norfolk, Japan, Washington state and now Monterey.

And the effort has some success stories under its belt ... A San Diego Sailor pitched an app that effectively uses celestial navigation, and saw an immediate application in GPS-denied environments while on Navy vessels. The idea was connected to a sponsoring organization looking to advance the Sailor's innovation.

Closer to home, Student Services Officer Lt. Jesse Iwuji was named the winner of the best idea at this inaugural Monterey chapter meeting. Iwuji pitched the idea of rekindling the Navy's interest in NASCAR sponsorship for recruiting purposes. An avid race driver himself, he was drawn to the idea through his own participation in several professional racing events.

"It was a huge honor winning the event. It was a great proof of concept for my idea to bring the U.S. Navy back into NASCAR, and utilize the massive exposure opportunity in NASCAR ... to expand the Navy's recruiting efforts," said Iwuji. "I was not sure how the panel would see my idea especially after some of the great ideas and pitches that had gone before me, but I'm very happy it all went well."

Also presenting at the inaugural meeting was Marine Corps Capt. Nickolas Aionaaka, an NPS student in the material logistics program. His pitch related to his thesis, discussing reasons for miscommunication within the aviation logistics community.

"Senior leaders are given opportunities to attend professional conferences. How about a professional conference for our junior enlisted Sailors and Marines," Aionaaka asked. "Professional symposia increase awareness, understanding and networking among the organizational communities for the common goal of group collaboration and high-quality networks."